

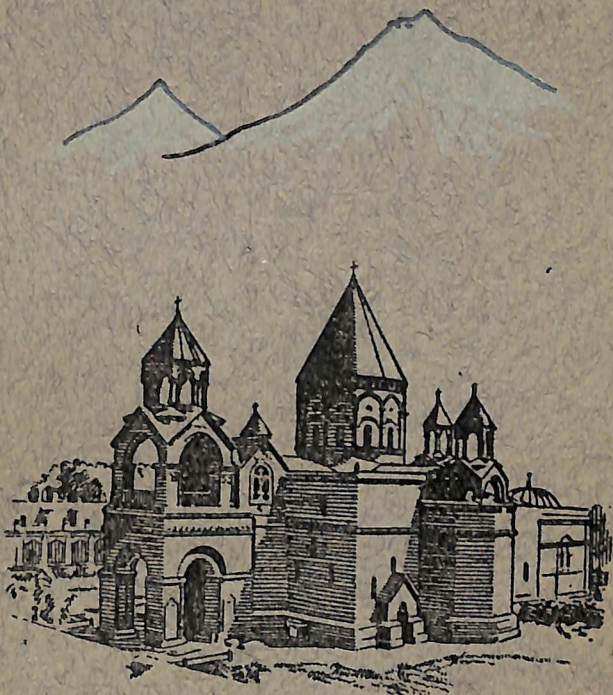
ARARAT.

A SEARCHLIGHT ON ARMENIA.

Vol. I. No. 11. London : MAY, 1914.

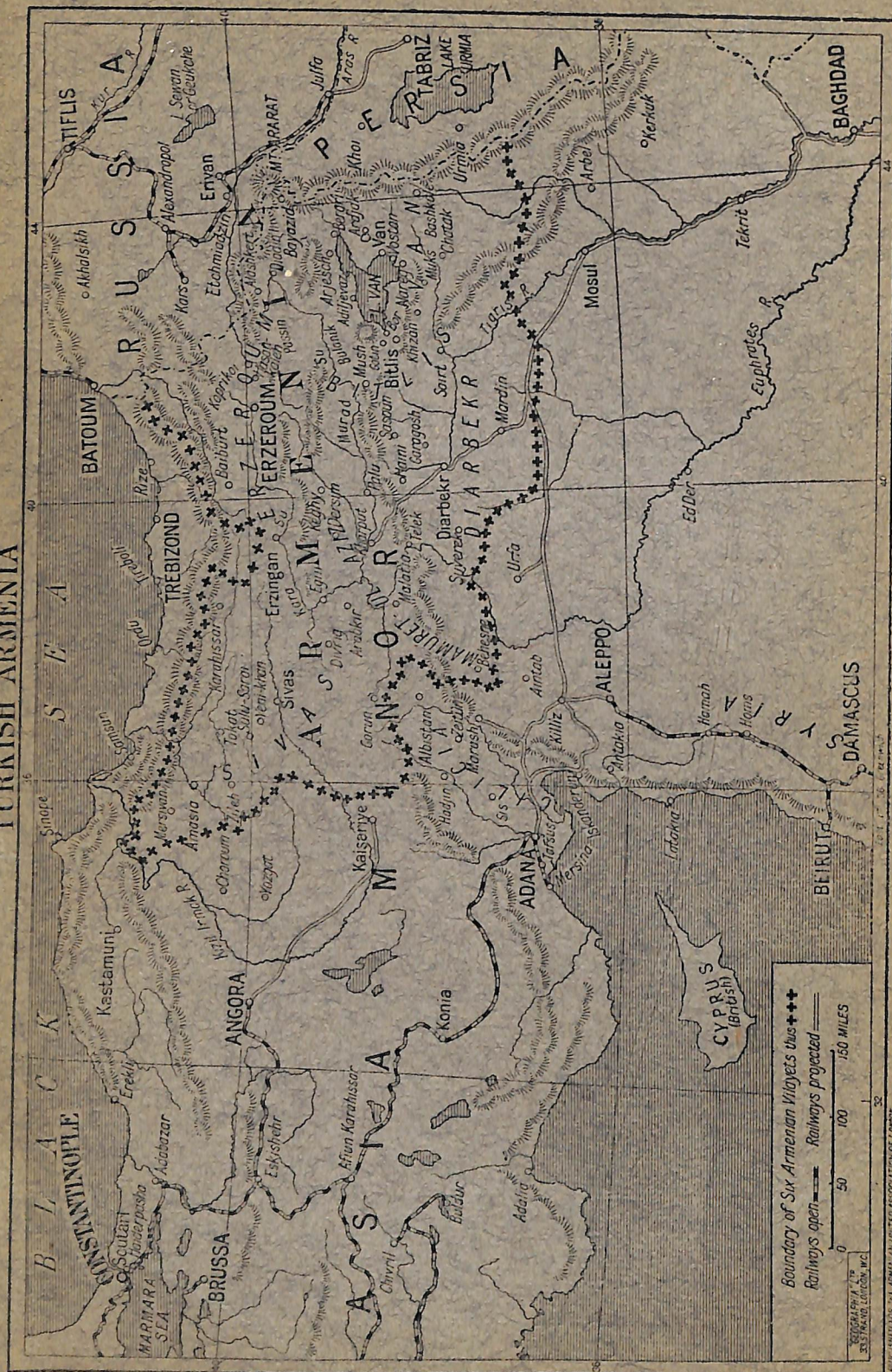
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All communications affecting this periodical should be addressed to the Editor, "Ararat," The Armenian United Association of London, 44, Queen's Road, Bayswater, London, W.

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Current Notes.

We have referred elsewhere in this issue to the two officials who have been selected to carry through for the Porte the very important task of establishing law and order in, and of bringing within the category of civilised regions, that unhappy tract of country known as Turkish Armenia. Both M. Westenenk and Lieut.-Colonel Hoff are men of proved capacity, and those acquainted with them are loud in extolling the wisdom of the choice. It is for the Porte now to push through the preliminaries and to launch these officials on the career for which they are destined. We still await with eagerness the formal promulgation of the scheme of reforms, which was accorded the combined approval of Turkey on one side, and of Russia and Germany on the other, as representing the Powers. It was stated that the scheme could only be formally published when the names of the Inspectors-General were available for insertion. These names are now available, and the formal issue of the scheme should no longer be delayed. High hopes have been entertained in the chancelleries of Europe as to the good-will of Turkey on this occasion, a hope that was voiced by Sir Edward Grey in the House of Commons, and we are ready to attune our expectations to the same high pitch of optimism, if circumstances will permit. It is three weeks now that the two selected officials have been in Constantinople, but nothing has transpired as to the progress of the preliminaries to enable them to proceed to their spheres of operations. From what we have been given to understand of their antecedents, they are essentially men of action, who are leaving behind them careers of exceptional promise under their own Governments, and we doubt if they will silently remain inactive under any scheme which is not backed by earnestness and promptitude. It behoves the Turks, therefore, to make the best of the excellent start already made, and to do all in their power to secure the firm attachment of these officials to the interests of their Empire.

That the officers themselves are not without high hopes of their usefulness and permanent residence in their new home is evidenced by M. Westenenk being accompanied by his wife and daughter. The British in India have done marvellous work for the regeneration of the people, and the Viceroys have been assisted in no small measure by the tactful usefulness of their consorts in ameliorating the condition of the women of the country; and such names as Lady Dufferin, Lady Minto and Lady Hardinge sound familiar in connection with the betterment of the moral, physical and educational welfare of Indian womenfolk and children. The Dutch are no whit behind the British in the

administration of their vast colonial empire, and we have the greatest confidence that by her presence at the side of her husband in his task of regenerating their country, Madame Westenenk will gain laurels from Armenian, Turkish and Kurdish women for her share towards the uplifting of them into a higher sense of their responsibilities as the mothers of future generations of a peace-loving nation.

We have, when occasion served, given due credit to advanced Turkish opinion in the matter of these reforms, and it is a pleasure to notice here the views expressed by Ali Kemal Bey in his daily paper, *Peyam*, of April 7th, on the urgency of introducing the reforms. He says:—"Whatever is to be done in regard to the nomination of European Inspectors, should be done at once. These foreign Inspectors and officials will not only introduce order and activity in the Ottoman administration, but they will also erect a bulwark in the country against foreign intrigues and interference" and so on. Much, as we have said, will depend on the rapidity with which the preliminaries of the task are undertaken, and we patiently await developments.

In the meantime the two Inspectors-General elect have been reaping golden opinions in Constantinople. On their arrival at that place the Armenian Patriarch sent a deputation to meet them in the name of the Armenian nation. On the 11th instant they paid a formal visit to the Patriarchate, where they spent half an hour in conversation with the Patriarch. We learn from private sources that the impression they left on the Patriarch, and on the members of the Civil Council of the Patriarchate who were present, were of the highest. We are informed that they do not seem particularly fond of tobacco, as they could not be induced to partake even of *genuine* Turkish cigarettes. Our informant, we are inclined to think, must be mistaken. The guests at the Patriarchate probably preferred

"The pipe, with solemn interposing puff,"
to what, in comparison, is a weak substitute for a Dutchman or a Norwegian—and besides, anything *genuinely* Turkish must be eschewed for the moment.

We have intentionally dropped out of the Contents of this publication, both last month and this, the section dealing with the "Latest News from Armenia," which usually brought to a focus the anarchy that prevailed, not because peace and order rule in the land—on the contrary, dark deeds continue to be reported from various directions, as bad as any we have hitherto chronicled. But, with the prospect of a brighter administration which we trust is near at hand, we do not feel that any good purpose will be served by our raking at the embers, which the Turks themselves are showing a desire to see that they burn themselves out. We give elsewhere in this issue an account of the

drastic action taken by the Turkish Government against the Kurdish ringleaders of the attack on Bitlis. It is a wider application of such measures that is needed, and we doubt not that the near advent of the high European officials is already casting its shadow before it. It will indeed be a relief when we can re-open our section of "Latest News" by chronicling progress from the various provinces of Turkish Armenia.

We would draw special attention to the appearance in English of M. Tchobanian's lecture on Armenians and their culture, delivered in Paris, which has recently been published by Messrs. J. M. Dent and Sons. M. Tchobanian, as a poet and author, needs no word of praise from us—his reputation is already established as a national asset. His power of focussing in a few pages the most salient features of his subject is such as to make the little volume of special usefulness to English—nay, even Armenian—readers, whose education on Armenian history and culture has been neglected. A review of the work, specially contributed for these pages by an authority on Near Eastern Questions, will be found in our Literary Section. The publishers are to be congratulated on the specially becoming and dainty form in which they have brought out the little volume; while Armenians will be grateful to Lord Bryce for the kindly words contained in his Introduction.

We hear with pleasure that an interesting concert is to be given at the Grafton Galleries shortly by Miss Mannig Koran, professionally known as "Manna Karina," when she will introduce to the British public the charm of some Armenian Folk Songs, as well as such old and modern Italian, French, Russian and English songs and German *Lieder* that we have had the pleasure of listening to on former occasions. We hear that a special feature of the programme will be a "Phantasy of Life" composed by Michael Zacharewitch, the well-known Russian violinist and composer, for song, violin, recitation and pianoforte. The verses of this, sung and spoken, have been specially selected from the stanzas of the *Rubāiyāt* of Omar Khayyām. As an Armenian artiste of pronounced talent, Miss Koran has not only our heartiest good wishes for her enterprise, but we feel that she is also adding to the prestige of our nation in the musical world of London.

Our remarks last month about the library of the Armenian United Association are bearing fruit sooner than we expected. The late Mr. B. Barounakian, of London, left for disposal, in the hands of Dr. M. K. Gudenian, his library consisting of 110 volumes. The latter gentleman has transferred the entire collection to our bookshelves, and we have to express our deep gratitude for this gift.

The Madness of Turkey.

The excuse for writing this article in England and in English, instead of writing it in Turkish or Armenian and in Constantinople, is that there is no freedom of the press in Turkey. It is true that in Constantinople and elsewhere in Turkey there has been discussion of subjects vitally affecting the interests of both Armenians and Turks, but such discussions of common utility can only be undertaken at considerable risk. Only recently we had an instance of the summary dealing by a court martial of the Armenian editor of *Azatomart* for translating into his paper an article by the Rev. Harold Buxton on his travels in Armenia, which appeared in the London *Contemporary Review*. For his rashness the Armenian editor had to pay a fine, besides undergoing a sentence of imprisonment. Moreover, political discussions—if that be the correct description of disputes regarding the continuance of mediæval barbarities and the introduction of civilising influences—are apt to lead to more satisfactory results if carried on in a quiet and impartial atmosphere, with a detachment and freedom from the bias of local passions.

Historical circumstances have made Armenians, Turks and Kurds neighbours for the last five centuries. They have, thus, had full opportunities of gauging each others merits and defects—indeed, they know each other very well. We have also the detached statements of British and Foreign writers, some with life-long experience of the country and people they deal with, others with superficial knowledge from limited travel. From these we can glean a variety of opinions, that the Armenians are civilised, industrious and cultured; that they are cowards and money-lending blood-suckers; that the Turks are fanatics and savages; or that they are the “only gentlemen” to be found in the Near East. For our present purpose we will put all such opinions aside. Our object here is to deal with the Armenian Question from the point of view of Turks themselves, and by the light of facts and figures which cannot be disputed.

It is not a disputed fact that from the beginning of Turkish rule in Europe and Western Asia, Christians were considered as outside the protection of Mohammedan law and dispensation. Armenians, amongst others, were compelled to pay the *kharaj*, or tax of slavery, to the Turkish ruler, the rate of which depended on the power of the Christian to pay, or on that of the Turk to extort. A free hand, too, was given to local Kurdish feudal chiefs in Armenia proper, to levy such a tribute on their Armenian neighbours as would reduce them to a state of serfdom, and just keep them alive merely as the producers of wealth for their masters. This latter tribute, called *khafir*, is still levied by Kurdish chiefs, who in their turn have to pay *backshish* to pashas in Constantinople, or to the governor of the vilayet; or again it is levied by Kurdish brigands from Armenians in the outlying districts of Bitlis, Van and Diarbekir. It is also well-known to the Turk that

the Armenian peasantry and traders, though labouring under the heavy weight of taxation described above, and very often robbed of their all, constitute the only element whereby the eternally empty coffers of the Treasury in the north-east of the Empire can be filled.

Where, again, it has suited the Turk, he has availed himself of the brains and the energies of Armenians, whether it be as administrators or financiers. From men like Artin Bezjian in 1834 to Gabriel Nouradunghian, Minister for Foreign Affairs at the commencement of the last Balkan War, Armenians have given of their best for the good of the State, often at a sacrifice of the interests of their own oppressed nation. Krikor Odian was selected to carry through a diplomatic mission to the British Foreign Office during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78; and to him must be assigned the real authorship of the Turkish Constitution, which is now accepted as that of Midhat Pasha. It was Hagop Kazazian, Finance Minister in the late eighties, who introduced reforms in Turkish finance to the extent allowed him by the cupidity of the Turkish bureaucracy. There are others we could name who have done equally good work for the various departments of the Turkish State.

The Turks know that when the leaders of Constitutional Turkey were either the humble servants of Abdul Hamid, or fugitives in Europe, it was the Armenian peasantry of Zeitun, Sassoun, Mush, Van, etc., who struggled unaided against Hamidian tyranny for ideals which the “Young Turk” now professes to be his own; and in this struggle against overwhelming odds, hundreds of thousands of Armenians laid down their lives, and the survivors reaped but the direst economic ruin. They know too well that it was such Armenian action that paved the way for the Revolution of 1908. It is hardly necessary to remind the Turkish Government of the enthusiasm with which Armenians greeted the advent of the “Young Turk” régime, burying fathoms deep the memories of bye-gone miseries and oppressions. The answer of the “Positivist” Young Turk to this fraternization was the Adana massacres! And yet three years later we see Armenian soldiers in the Turkish ranks displaying such bravery and loyalty on the Thracian battlefields as to elicit the encomiums not only of European war correspondents, but even of Turkish leaders themselves, of the late Nazim Pasha, and of Mahmud Shefketh Pasha. And how were they then rewarded? By the abduction and forcible conversion to Islam of their wives and sisters and daughters they had left behind them! Can the enlightened brains of Turkey deny that the limits of human patience and forbearance have not been outstepped?

It has recently been the practice of the chauvinistic press of Turkey to brand the demand of Armenians for European control over reforms as a bid for separatism, and therefore a treachery against the Ottoman Empire. These views have been backed by the most blood-thirsty threats of massacre, and by boycott. It is a relief to see isolated opinions, such as that of Mahmud Sadik Bey, in the Turkish

daily *Sabah*, of Ali Kemal Bey in the *Ikdam* (a translation of which was given in our October issue), and of many Turkish Valis and generals in office in Armenia, whom for obvious reasons we do not name, to the effect that Turkey, left to herself, can accomplish no reforms.

In this connection we might add that even the most civilised nations, in their political and economic relations to each other, are impelled as soulless machines, guided not by sentiment, but solely by principles affecting their national interests and by the instincts of self-preservation. The Turks should wake up to the truth of this axiom and recognise even at this eleventh hour that by the attachment of the Armenians they would be serving the best interests of their Empire; and so far as the Armenians are concerned, we can confidently state that they would be looking forward to a happy and prosperous future, if they but formed an integral part of a strong and regenerated Turkey, which has reversed her past policy, and inaugurated that equality in the sight of the law, which is the basis of all reform, coupled with security of life. We cannot think that after her past lessons, Turkey will refuse to exercise common sense and see where her own interests and the foundations of political stability lie.

The policy of the great Western nations has been to make themselves internally strong and externally powerful, and to this end they have encouraged the development of their population, so as to enable them to bear the burden of heavy taxation in cases of national emergency. England, under the Tudors and the Stuarts, encouraged immigration of Flemish, Dutch, Huguenot and other settlers, skilled in handicraft, so as to assist in developing the economic possibilities of the country; and to these immigrants special privileges were accorded. How does Turkey act? Under the misconceived ideas of nationalism and Pan-Islamism, she drives to desperation the industrious Armenian element, appropriates their lands and settles on them Moslem immigrants who, far from producing wealth, are a drag on the State. Abdul Hamid encouraged this policy for years, with Moslems from the Caucasus and the Balkan countries, each immigrant family receiving, according to its numbers, from £T18 to £T30, together with immunity from taxation for five years, the lands being wrested from Armenians, who were either driven from the country or killed. The "Young Turk" party continued this policy with regard to Macedonia, and since the latter country has been occupied by the Balkan States, the settlers have been trekked off to Asia Minor, to be squatted on the lands of the Armenians. It is an axiom of economic science that an increase of population, with the development of natural resources, must add to the national wealth. The reverse is the practice in Turkey, where means are devised for reducing the most energetic element of the subjects; the exploitation of mineral wealth is tabooed; roads and communications remain in the primitive state of the Middle Ages; no steps are taken for the improvement of public health, or for battling against epidemics, while drainage and water-supply are things unheard of.

On the Turks in general, and on Abdul Hamid in particular, the term "Armenian," since its insertion in diplomatic documents from the time of the Treaty of Berlin onwards, has had a maddening effect. It was a carefully planned object of that potentate to stamp out the very name from the Turkish provinces. He went even to the extent of gerrymandering the administrative divisions of the Armenian vilayets with a view to splitting up Armenian majorities. Thus, the Armenians formed a majority in the vilayet of Erzeroum before the Berlin Treaty. Soon afterwards the districts of Keghi, Tortum, etc., where Moslems largely predominated, were incorporated in the vilayet, Keghi being detached from Kharpout, and Tortum from Trebizond. For similar reasons, the sandjak of Hekkiari was detached from Mosul and incorporated in Van; and so with other vilayets, in order to sink the Armenian majorities. We need not go into the more fiendish details of the plans for extermination, which continued from 1885 to 1896, leading to an exodus of survivors to the neighbouring countries, and the absorption of their lands and houses by Kurds and invited Moslem immigrants.

On the advent of the "Young Turk" this migration began to take an opposite direction, and the Armenians, scattered to the four winds, took heart, and to the strains, so to speak, of "Home, Sweet Home!" turned their faces again to the land of their birth. In the autumn of 1908 alone, no less than 40,000 fugitive Armenians crossed the border from Transcaucasia into Turkish Armenia, and, with a short interruption caused by the scare of the Adana massacres, the influx of Armenians from Russia, the United States, Rumania, and other countries, continued until the end of 1910. These came with money, and what was of more importance, with an improved knowledge of agriculture and of arts and crafts, in the hope of making a fresh start on the sites of their ruined ancestral homes; and the work these returned fugitives did towards reconstruction and economic revival, where they could obtain possession of their homes and land, was marvellous.

The following figures, affecting a few villages, will be of interest in showing their rapid increase of population in so short a space of time, and they were by no means exceptional cases:—

Vilayet.	Village.	Armenian Population.	
		1907.	1911.
Erzeroum ..	Aros	854 ..	1,240
"	Karatchoban	1,850 ..	2,556
Van	Ourantz	610 ..	1,100
"	Karkar	1,470 ..	3,500
	(19 small villages)		
Bitlis ..	Vartenis	1,600 ..	2,340
"	Liz	1,244 ..	1,950

and so on.

Side by side with this sudden influx of population there was a marked increase in the revenues, even in Bitlis, which is designated by Sir Gerard Lowther (see Blue Book No. 1, 1909, p. 87) as one of the blackest points in the Empire. The annual tithe tax in the district of Mush (a sandjak of Bitlis), which had fallen in 1907 as low as £T25,000, rose in 1911 to £T70,000, that is to say, in a period of three years of comparative tranquillity it increased by 280 per cent. The sheep tax in the vilayet of Bitlis in 1911 exceeded the realisation of 1907 by £T5,500; and it is noteworthy that Turkish officials themselves attributed these increases solely to the revival of activity among the Armenians.

This promising state of affairs, however, became distasteful to the "Young Turk" politicians, who promptly reverted to the methods of Abdul Hamid; and since the spring of 1911 a free hand has been given to notorious Kurdish brigand chiefs to swoop down on the defenceless Armenian peasantry, to raid their cattle and substance, and to levy tribute; while murders and highway robbery became of daily occurrence, the culprits going scot free.

It is perhaps a lack of imagination and of reasoning powers, it may be ignorance of constructive policy or of the science of statesmanship, or it may be his proverbial fatalism that is driving the Turk into the inevitable grave that the Powers are digging round him with their railway and other concessions in Asia Minor and elsewhere. He has, however, reluctantly consented to a plan of reforms, and has even selected two European Inspectors-General, who have already wended their way to Constantinople for their plan of operations. Let him see to it before it is too late, that his salvation lies in his permitting these high officials to carry out their mandate without obstruction. Millions borrowed at ruinous rates and spent in the purchase of Dreadnoughts are but the dreams of childhood for expensive toys which must be had at any price; but the real statecraft of robust manhood is the systematic development of the country, the achievement of the happiness of the people and of harmony among the constituent elements of the Empire. Turkey may play with her Dreadnoughts, but if, at the same time, she is in earnest with her reforms, she will find the Armenians heart and soul with her; and this sincere co-operation, under the ægis of equal laws and security, cannot but bring about a resuscitated Empire, and secure the peace of Europe. The world would then truly recognise that the Turk, obsessed for long centuries with the spirit of madness, had indeed shaken off her evil genius, and had emerged into the realm of sanity, to join the brotherhood of progressive nations.

The Inspectors-General Elect.

We are enabled to state definitely that the Porte has approved of the selection of the two gentlemen, whose names were foreshadowed in our last issue, as Inspectors-General for the Armenian vilayets, viz., M. Westenenk, from Holland, and Lieut.-Colonel Hoff, from Norway. Both these gentlemen left Paris on April 30th for Constantinople, where the preliminaries are to be arranged before they enter upon their duties.

It should be noted that in future we cannot speak of "six Armenian vilayets" as forming the sphere of control of these officials. The vilayet of Trebizond has been brought within their purview under the proposed scheme of reforms, so that there will really be seven vilayets for this special control, which will be divided into two sectors. The inclusion of Trebizond in what has hitherto been considered as Turkish Armenia is a move in the right direction; as any country without direct access to a port must necessarily be handicapped in the process of development. Roads and communications will no doubt form one of the essential features of better government, and direct communication, whether by road or rail, with a port on the Black Sea in the vilayet of Trebizond, will do more than anything else to bring the light of civilisation into the dark corners of the unhappy land which has been a prey to anarchy, and at the mercy of lawless bands for centuries past. Indeed, the suggestion of giving Turkish Armenia an outlet on the Black Sea in the direction of Trebizond was thrown out by ourselves as far back as August last.

Now that the selection of the high officials to undertake the administration of Turkish Armenia is an accomplished fact, we can but hope that the preliminaries at Constantinople will be pushed through with as little delay as possible; and by such rapid action alone can Turkey display to the world her earnestness and her good will to bring to fruition the task she has set herself. If within a month from their arrival at Constantinople the two Inspectors-General are able to start for their respective spheres of operations, armed with the necessary *personnel*, a clear-cut set of instructions backed by full powers, and supplied with the requisite funds, they will be in a position to set their machinery in motion, to get into their hands the threads of the various questions to be dealt with, and to establish the moral influence of their presence, well before the winter sets in—a necessity which is of paramount importance in face of the anarchy that has been prevalent, a demonstration of which was given by the Kurds at Bitlis a little more than a month ago. And for the success of their labours, four millions of Armenian hearts the world over will offer up their sincere prayers.

In closing our remarks on these important appointments, we will give our readers a glimpse into the character and the antecedents of the two gentlemen, on whose shoulders is about to be cast the burden of establishing peace and good-will in that beautiful land which has been rent for so long by disorder and distress.

The following account of M. WESTENENK is taken from *Het Vaderland*, of April 18th, 1914, published at The Hague :—

“ L. C. Westenenk, who has been appointed an Inspector-General in East Anatolia, was an Assistant Resident in the Netherland East Indies. He hails from Deventer, in the province of Overysel, in Holland.

“ He told a Dutch journalist, in the middle of April, that he knew nothing officially of his appointment by the Turkish Government, but that he was requested to call on the Turkish Ambassador at The Hague in the course of that week.

“ He was born in 1872 in his father's coffee plantation, in the neighbourhood of Semarang (Java). He left the East Indies when he was seven for his education in the Netherlands. He was an undergraduate at Leiden University from 1890 till 1893, and after that, stayed for the period of a year in the Preanger Regencies (Java), as a future member of the Dutch Civil Service. His first appointment was as Sub-Controller in the Western District of Borneo, where he was afterwards promoted to a Controllershship. In 1896 he went through the great mutiny in the Netherland Indies as civil officer, and was decorated with the Cross of the 4th Class of the Military Order of William (equivalent to the V.C.).

“ He then obtained leave of absence for a few months on account of overwork, and subsequently went to Java, where he married in 1897. Afterwards he went to Pajakoemboeh and Sawah Loento, both on Sumatra's western coast; was from 1900 to 1902 in Achin, and then passed a furlough of two years in Deventer, where his family live.

“ At the beginning of 1905 he returned to Fort de Cock, which is also on the western coast of Sumatra, went through the mutinies there in 1908 and 1909, and was decorated with the Order of Orange-Nassau, first as Knight and later, in December, 1909, as ‘ Officer,’ getting at the same time his promotion as Assistant-Resident in Fort Van de Capellen.

“ In 1910 he returned for a period of four months to Deventer, and on resuming his duties he was employed by the Government to elaborate various schemes on behalf of the Western coast of Sumatra. He returned again, on March 15th, 1913, to Deventer, where he is still living.

“ He has great expectations of his work in Eastern Anatolia, whether it be on behalf of the population or in the interests of Europe. He is full of hope for the future; although he recognises that he will have to struggle with numberless difficulties, and that the position is not free from danger.”

The following concise account of Lieut.-Col. NICOLAI HOFF has been kindly furnished by a Norwegian correspondent :—

“ This Officer was born in Christiania in 1867, and was appointed an Officer in 1888; he is also a Norwegian Barrister-at-law. He was promoted to a Captaincy in 1899; and since then he has been mostly employed in the Norwegian Ministry of Defence, where he has occupied one of the leading positions. He has also had much to do with the reforms in the Norwegian Army, which have been undertaken during the last few years; and he has been a teacher of Military Law at the College for young officers.

“ He has the reputation of being a very capable officer, and also the gift of making himself endeared to the soldiers serving under him. He is very energetic, and a tall, fine fellow, clean-shaven, and altogether an excellent type of a Norwegian officer.”

Turks and Kurds at Bitlis.

Last month we referred to the Kurdish raid on Bitlis, and showed that it must have been known to the Turkish authorities that the Kurds had been restive, and that action on their part, in view of the coming reforms, was practically a certainty. It was fortunate that at the critical moment the Vali of Bitlis, who had been dallying with the Kurds, resigned, and his place was taken by a more energetic functionary; and the timely concentration of troops resulted in the rout of the raiders, whose ultimate intention doubtless was to add another bloody chapter to the already overflowing record of Armenian woes.

We gave due credit to such Turkish action, and it is a satisfaction to note the further drastic measures that have been taken to deal with the culprits who deliberately engineered outbreaks, with the object of disputing the sovereignty of the Porte and perpetuating the anarchic reign of feudal autocracy.

Promptness of action has never been one of the virtues of the Turk, but in this case it is evident that the right man has been selected as Vali; and immediately the rebellion was suppressed, a court martial was instituted at Bitlis to try those responsible for the raid. As a result, this tribunal sentenced eleven of the ringleaders to death, and the sentence was duly carried out at Bitlis on the 7th of this month. Included in these eleven was the notorious Sheikh Said Ali of Khizan, who has been reckoned as the real organiser of the outbreak, though he is said to have acted through Sheikh Selim, who is still harboured in the Russian Consulate at Bitlis, where he took refuge. Another member of this band to pay the extreme penalty of the law was Fakih Khalil, who once held the post of examining magistrate in Khizan during the reign of Abdul Hamid, and whose fiendish excesses against Armenians will not be soon forgotten.

The Bitlis correspondent of *Azamatart* telegraphs to his paper on May 12th, information since confirmed by the Turkish Press Bureau, that three other Kurds from the same neighbourhood were hanged that morning—thus making the total of those executed on account of the raid fourteen.

All this is a remarkable departure from the customary practice of the Turkish authorities to let the Kurdish chiefs do as they pleased. The unwisdom of tackling the Kurds, the inability to repress them when no sufficient force existed in these distant regions, were stock excuses given to the Patriarchate when complaints poured in of brutalities committed against helpless Armenians. Suddenly we find that a strong controlling head at Constantinople, assisted by a Vali of the right sort on the spot, are able without difficulty to vindicate law and order. The Turk is indeed waking up to his responsibilities.

Our readers may be interested in the following brief obituary notice of Sheikh Said Ali, recently executed at Bitlis :—

An uncouth man of about forty years of age, he carried considerable weight among the Kurds throughout Bitlis and in the south-west of the vilayet of Van. He is the descendant of a family of Arab Sheikhs, and his great-grandfather, one Shiekh Savfetullah, emigrated from Bagdad to Khizan in the early twenties of the last century. After the second generation, the family identified itself with Kurdish interests. The notorious Djelaleddine, the father of the subject of our notice, led a host of Kurdo-Arab Bashibazouks to the Russian frontiers during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78. Before reaching their destination, this irregular army of brigands committed horrible outrages on their way, especially in the Armenian villages of Alashkert. On coming in contact with the Russian forces, this nondescript army was routed at the first encounter by the force under General Loris-Melikoff, an Armenian by birth and education, who was commanding the Russian Army in the Caucasus. The Sheikh was wounded in the rout, and died soon after returning home to Khizan. His son the present Sheikh, has vowed to avenge his father's death on the helpless Armenians, and it would be painful to recall all that the Armenians of Khizan, some 12,000 in number, have suffered at his hands, particularly since 1894.

When the Turkish Revolution broke out in July, 1908, there were hundreds of complaints against him from not only Armenians, but Kurds as well; and thousands of witnesses were ready to give evidence of his brutality, if only the safety of their lives and property were guaranteed. Indeed, one Hadji Mehmed Bey, another powerful Kurdish chief of Khizan, was shot dead in his home in 1909 for daring to give evidence against him. After a short term of imprisonment, Sheikh Said Ali was released and made a protégé of the "Young Turk" Committee. His freedom of action since then was due to a mutual understanding. In the latest rebellion in Bitlis, the instrument employed by Sheikh Said Ali was his father's prayer-teller, Sheikh Selim.

"From London to Armenia,"

By ARAM RAFFI.

(Continued from p. 334.)

VI.

PERSIAN MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

The Industrial Rôle of Armenians—East and West—Moslems and Wine—Shah Hussein's Edict—Contrast of Persian and European Customs—The Persian Poet.

From very early times, Persian commerce has always been in the hands of Armenians. Armenians have also filled many important and responsible offices in the Government, besides following professions and exercising handicrafts, in which they had no rivals. Formerly, especially during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, not only were the Armenians of Persia the sole medium of communication between Asia and Europe, but they also introduced into European countries many Oriental manufactures, such as silk-weaving. There are abundant records extant of the services rendered by Armenians to manufactures and commerce, although the history of the approach of East and West, including the work done by Armenians in the matter, has yet to be written. But when European industries were established in the East, and direct communication was instituted between East and West, the Armenians were unable to retain their former position—for obvious reasons, on which we need not expatiate; we will only remark that the East gives way before the capital, mechanical invention and organising power of the West. The closer the approach between the East and West, the more conspicuous becomes the contrast between them. Eastern civilisation is, to a certain extent, superseded by Western; the East has become an imitator of the West. In the East there is a lack of initiative and enterprising power. Nevertheless, under good government, with facilities for good education, Armenians are able to hold their own; witness, for instance, in the Caucasus.

In Persia, religion still has some influence in determining men's occupations. Although gardening and fruit-growing are among the occupations of Armenians, in the bazaars the fruiterers are exclusively Persian, for a Mahomedan will not buy fresh fruit of a Christian, thinking it would be contaminated by contact with an "unbeliever." Besides fresh fruit, Mahomedans generally sell dried fruits and dry grains, such as rice; also tobacco and opium, so a Persian bazaar consists of an array of shops, kept by Mahomedans, and a number of offices for transacting business, kept by Armenians. The business consists in buying native products, *e.g.*, raisins, and such goods as carpets, and dispatching them to Russia and other European countries. At some of the offices arrangements are also made for the transport of

goods from one place to another, the arrangements being necessitated by the absence of railways, which obliges all transport to be effected by caravans, *e.g.*, the goods imported from abroad by X, a merchant in Ispahan, are received at Y's office at the frontier, whence they are forwarded to Rasht, thence to Ghazoin, thence to Teheran, and so on up to Ispahan. For this transport the agents receive a commission.

As there are scarcely any banks in Persia, some of these agencies transact banking business, *e.g.*, X, who is in Tiflis, wants to send money to B in Khoi. X goes to a transacting agency in Tiflis, pays the money, and these agents write to their agents in Khoi, instructing them to pay the sum mentioned to the person named. This sort of arrangement prevails especially in Asia Minor. All business of this nature is now in the hands of Armenians; but, at the first whistle of the railway, and with the introduction of a proper banking system, all these transactions will cease. This is not matter for regret, for Armenians will be able to direct their energies into other channels more in touch with the times, and perhaps to inaugurate under the improved conditions, a new era in industry. The signs of this are even now apparent, to some extent. To-morrow trains will bring Persia to the door of Europe. Armenians are conscious that the old state of things is giving way to the new, and they are eager to qualify themselves to hold their own under the new conditions. The indication of this is their activity in improving education. Everybody knows that Urmi will be the greatest industrial town in the Azerbejan of to-morrow. In that city the American Mission has a college. The Russian, French and German Missions have also educational institutions, but the Armenians have none to speak of. Now, as if awakened from a lethargy, they are showing great energy in regard to this matter. They have collected large funds among themselves and are building a great educational institution, conducted on the modern system, as well as a new church and library, and even a structure destined to be used as a theatre. A well-known Armenian firm has just opened in Urmi the first tobacco factory in Azerbejan.

The shops in Azerbejan containing European merchandise are mostly in the hands of Armenians, Persian shop-keepers dealing chiefly in native goods.

You see a Persian merchant sitting cross-legged on his carpet. Though he is ignorant, though he is carrying on the same trade as his forefathers, though he confines himself to the products of his own country and has no links with any other, still he is prosperous. This is due to his limited wants; in food, clothing, and the furniture of his house his requirements are simple and inexpensive; he has no need of money for the supply of intellectual necessities. His children are not sent to school; they help him in the shop. He reads no newspaper; he gets all the news from the daily gossip of the bazaar; he never reads novels or other books; his love of narrative is gratified by the tales of a story-teller, recounted to the accompaniment of the smoke of a *narghileh* when there is a scarcity of customers. An Armenian

can hardly compete with such as he. He has to send his children to school, requires means to supply his intellectual wants and money to contribute to national causes. The Persian merchant, with his small requirements, forms a striking contrast to a Persian landowner or Khan, whose extravagance and love of ease are proverbial, and in whom we see the natural consequence of idleness, the necessary result of capital acquired without labour. In the merchant we have an illustration of the good effect of enforced labour in discouraging idleness and luxury.

The Armenians in Persia also occupy themselves in handicrafts and trades. Such goods as European shoes and other wearing apparel are made and sold almost exclusively by Armenians. There is some doubt as to what will be the future of this industry and trade. Persian shoemakers and tailors are now beginning to compete with Armenians. This competition is not based on the make of the goods or the quality of the material; on the contrary, goods made by Persians are immeasurably inferior to those made by Armenians; being such, they are consequently cheap; and that is an attraction to ignorant people who are unable to discriminate between good and bad.

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There remains another occupation which has been for centuries in the hands of the Armenians, is so now, and will probably be so in the future. This is the manufacture and sale of wine and spirits. Circumstances are favourable to this trade. It is under no licensing system; the only charge is a duty of 2d. on every bottle of liquor. The cost of making wine and spirits is very small, because Azerbejan is the chief vine growing country.

Armenians have the prospect of keeping this occupation in their own hands, for Persians are forbidden, by their religion, to make or sell intoxicating drinks. Perhaps someone will wonder how this fact can be reconciled with the Persian Omar Khayam's praise of wine.

If Omar Khayam sang:—

“Here with a loaf of bread beneath the bough,
A flask of wine, a book of verse—and Thou
Beside me singing in the wilderness—
And wilderness is Paradise enow.”

his wine must have been made by an Armenian and perhaps bought at an Armenian inn.

According to the *Sharyat*, Persians have no right even to drink wine, although they used to drink it secretly and now drink it openly. Some say, by way of defence, that, although it is forbidden by the Law to drink *wine*, in that Law there is no mention of *vodka*, and the use of that beverage is so prevalent among Persians that the Government is reaping a considerable revenue from it. Armenians have several co-operative societies for the manufacture and sale of wine. With the establishment of railways and the growth of intercourse with Europeans this industry will increase. It has hitherto been, for the

most part, an occupation exclusively in the hands, and for the benefit, of Armenians; even so, it was handicapped by the fact that, owing to the abundance of vineyards in the country, many households make their own wine. Shah Abbas and his successors encouraged the wine industry, but, when Shah Hussein came to the throne (1629), things were changed. On the accession of this monarch, the Eunuchs of the Palace, desirous of gaining an ascendancy over him, resolved to tempt him to self-indulgence. But Hussein had been a diligent student of the Koran before his accession, and his diligence increased after he came to the throne to such a degree that he was nick-named "Moulah" (or "Parson"), Hussein, and, as the use of intoxicating liquors is forbidden in the Koran, he not only issued an Edict forbidding their use in his kingdom, but was the first to set an example of obeying his own Law, for he caused all the wine-vessels to be brought out of the cellars of his Palace into a public square and there to be broken in pieces. He also forbade the Armenians of Julfa, who used to supply the wine, to bring any more into the town; anyone who transgressed this order, however small the quantity of wine he furnished, was to forfeit his entire estate. This Edict struck dismay into the hearts, not only of the Eunuchs, but also of the nobles and courtiers, who had been accustomed to drink wine, for the practice had been lawful in Persia ever since the reign of Shah Abbas, *i.e.*, for more than 200 years. The Eunuchs determined to devise some way of making the king taste wine, for they thought that if he once tasted it, he would not be able to resist the temptation to go on drinking it. To effect their purpose, they applied to the Shah's maternal grandmother, to whom he partly owed his crown and for whom he had great affection and esteem. This lady sympathised with those who wished for the repeal of the Edict and was also anxious to gratify the people who had placed her grandson on the throne; she therefore willingly acceded to the proposal that she should feign sickness, and pretend, when Hussein came to see her, that the physicians had said that wine was the only thing that would save her life. The stratagem succeeded. As soon as the king heard the alleged medical order, though it was midnight, he at once sent to the Armenians at Julfa for wine. These merchants, suspecting a snare, declared that they had not a drop left, that they had not dared to keep wine since the promulgation of the Edict, nor could they tell where any could be procured, but they suggested an application to the Polish envoy. This application being successful, the king poured out some wine into a cup and presented it to his grandmother, who, however, refused to drink unless Hussein himself did likewise. When the latter pleaded the authority of the Koran, she quoted the maxim, current among the Persians: "Kings are subject to no Law; whatever they do, they commit no sin," and also reminded him how all his ancestors and predecessors had both taken wine themselves and permitted their courtiers to take it also. She added that, without it, kings must find it impossible to sustain the cares of State. Finally, she reiterated her refusal to drink the wine, though she knew (as she

sa d) that her life depended upon it, unless her grandson would set her the example. Thus adjured, Hussein complied with his grandmother's request, and after drinking a large cup of wine, he felt so invigorated that he continued the practice of imbibing intoxicating liquors, abandoning himself to it to such an extent that he was seldom sufficiently sober to attend to affairs of State.

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Some Persian manners and customs are curious and some of the habits of the Persians are almost directly opposed to those of Europeans. We cite here a few instances:

1. In Europe, if any part of the body is shaven, it is the face; in Persia, the beard is never shaven, but—especially in youth—the head often is. The reason for letting the beard grow is easily understood, as, among the Persians, the beard is regarded as significant of honour. A Persian often swears by his own beard or that of the Prophet. But why do Persians shave their heads, when young? Perhaps I shall be called a pedant if I suggest a historical explanation of the custom.

It seems that the same question puzzled Herodotus. In describing an engagement between the Persians and the Egyptians, he says—

"After the battle the bones of the fallen were collected and separated into two distinct heaps, whereupon the inhabitants of the place called my attention to the fact that the heads of the Persians were so soft that they would yield to the impression of a pebble, whereas those of the Egyptians were so hard that they could scarcely be broken by the blow of a large stone. The latter fact was thus accounted for by the Egyptians themselves. At a very early age (they said) they shaved their heads, thus exposing them to the action of the sun, which hardened them and prevented baldness."

No doubt the Persians have borrowed the practice from the Egyptians.

In the Persian "Passion play," which is a religious ceremony performed in the month of *Muharram*, the processions are formed parading through the streets of the town. The fanatical are wrapped in white garments representing their shrouds; and armed with swords and knives, these men work themselves up to such a frenzy that they cut their heads until the blood pours over their clothing.

Is this not done with an idea of hardening the skull?

The religious rites of Islam tend to make of the believers warriors.

2. In Europe, on entering a house, overcoats and walking-sticks are left in the hall; in Persia it is considered undignified for a gentleman to enter a room without his overcoat and stick.

3. In Europe, it is usual for men to take off their hats on entering a room; in Persia, it is considered derogatory to uncover the head, and to do so when praying is regarded as a sin.



4. In Europe, people enter a church or house with their shoes on, but in Persia shoes are removed before going in.

5. In Europe, women wear stockings and long skirts, but Persian women leave their legs bare.

6. The standard of feminine beauty also differs. In England slender women are admired; in Persia, fat ones, provided they are graceful. Muzafir Eddin, the late Shah, was fond of taking photographs. A certain English lady who was stout but not without charm, was once presented to him, whereupon he asked if he might photograph her. The lady consented, but wondered why the process was so long. The fact was that the Shah was struck with admiration, but, as in Persia it is considered rude for a man to look at a woman's face, he could only gratify his desire of gazing at her when using the camera.

An old traveller thus contrasts the habits of the Persians and the Turks :—

The Turks sit cross-legged on the ground; the Persians sit upon their heels.

The Turks sit on sofas and lean against cushions; the Persians sit on carpets and lean against the wall.

The Turks drink coffee without any milk or sugar; the Persians drink tea with sugar, though without milk.

The Turks wear turbans and fezes; the Persians wear high caps of black lamb's wool.

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Persian peasants are very industrious and hard-working. They are good gardeners and also labour in the fields.

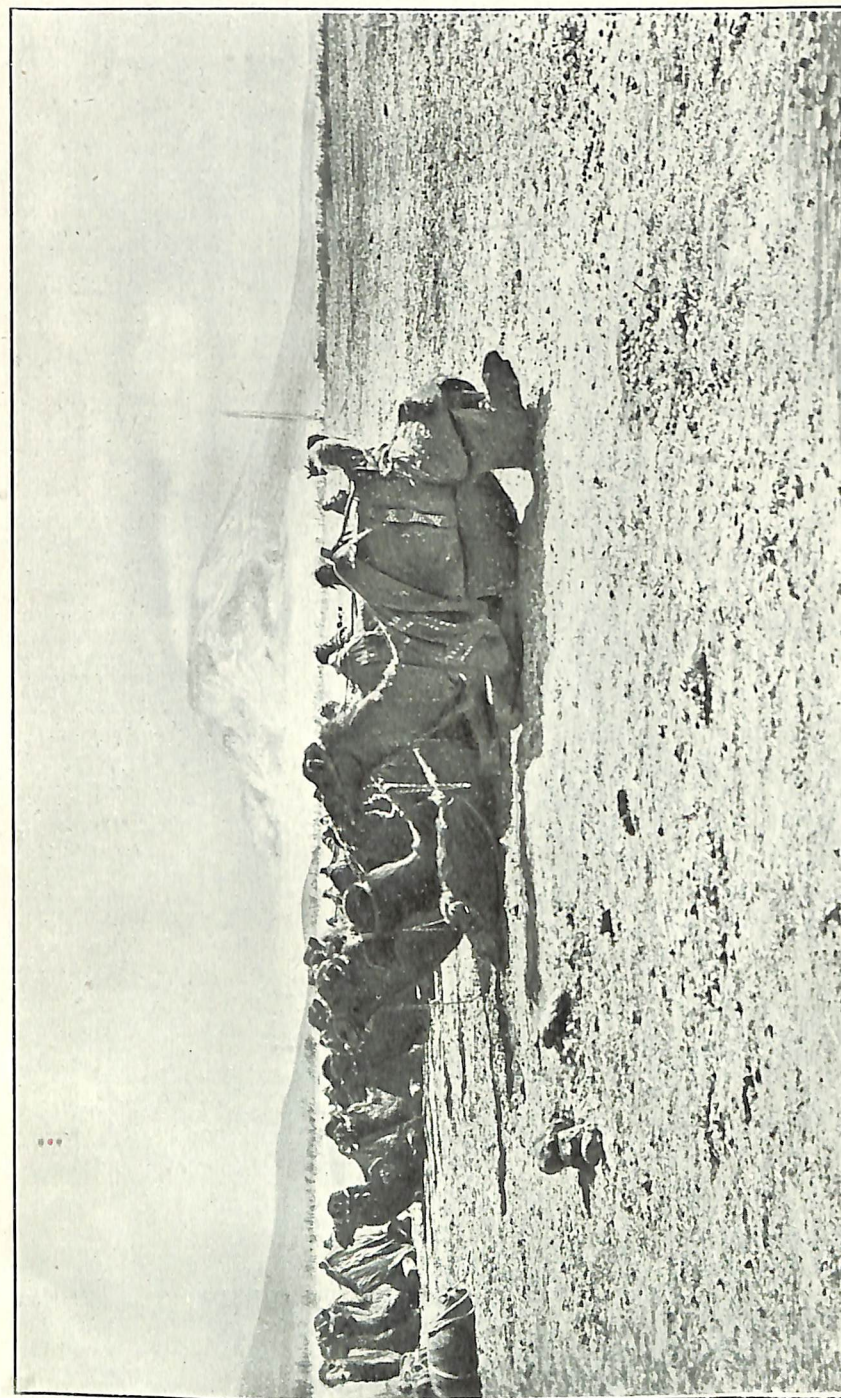
A Persian who is a real gentleman is very charming. With all his high-flown eloquence, polished manners, and studied politeness, he is sincere. In his company, one is conscious of the presence of an old and high civilisation, and his conversation sparkles with quotations from those beautiful Persian poems which are so delightful to the ear.

The Persian poets are very generous. Hafiz sang :

" . . . Bokhara, ay, and Samarcand, on her black mole will I bestow. . . . "

When the conquering forces of Tamerlane entered Shiraz in 1393, Tamerlane summoned the poet into his presence and demanded of him how he had dared to say in one of his lyrics that he would gladly give the conqueror's cities of Bokhara and Samarkand in exchange for the mole on the cheek of his beloved. Hafiz answered that such lavishness on his part had brought him to his present poverty, and the Tartar, laughing at the readiness of the reply, took him into favour.

(To be continued.)



Caravan, with Ararat in the Distance.

Dinner to Mr. Aneurin Williams, M.P.

The Armenian Political Committee of England gave a dinner in honour of Mr. Aneurin Williams, M.P., at the Trocadero on Friday, April 24th. It was a fitting tribute to Mr. Williams, as Chairman of the British Armenia Committee, for his disinterested labours on behalf of Armenia; as well as the occasion for offering him congratulations on his recent successful entry into the House of Commons, where his knowledge and energy will have the scope needed for advancing the cause he has at heart.

The Armenian Committee in England has two branches, one in London and the other in Manchester, the two centres where the bulk of the colony reside, and these two branches work in unison. The chair at this dinner was appropriately taken by His Grace, Archbishop Utudjian, the Armenian prelate of Western Europe with headquarters at Manchester, who was a picturesque figure in his black cowl and robes, and his decorations. A deputation from the Manchester branch of the Committee was also present.

The company that sat down to a well-served dinner embraced several members of the British Armenia Committee, prominent among whom were Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., Mr. Noel Buxton, M.P., Dr. V. H. Rutherford, Mr. J. M. Dent, Mr. J. Arthur Jutsum; among other well-wishers were Prof. Bickerton and Mr. A. E. Wilson. The principal members of the Armenian colony, of course, welcomed the guests. Among letters of regret at their unavoidable absence from several well-known politicians, one seemed specially to touch the company as of a deeper note, the announcement of the enforced absence, through ill-health, of Mr. Arthur G. Symonds, the indefatigable Secretary of the British Armenia Committee. His own words will express his feelings best—"to no one present at the dinner is the sacred cause of Armenia dearer and closer to his heart than to mine."

The speeches began by His Grace, the Archbishop, giving "The King," and "The Catholicos of Etchmiadzin," with appropriate references to the head of the British nation, and the head of the Armenian Church—both of whom, by a peculiar coincidence, happen to be George V. The toast of the guest of the evening was to have been proposed by Mr. H. N. Mosditchian, who is the national delegate for Great Britain, but unfortunately he was called away suddenly to the Continent on national affairs, and his place had to be taken by Lieut.-Colonel G. M. GREGORY, who said: It is a most pleasing task that has fallen to my lot, and that is to propose the toast of our friend, Mr. Aneurin Williams, the Chairman of the British Armenia Committee, and to express to him the unbounded thankfulness of my countrymen for the eminently British qualities he is bringing to bear on the difficult task of attempting to bring relief to our unhappy country. I have during the last few months been accorded the privilege of attending the meetings of the Committee of which he is the head, and it has been a pleasure to feel that our interests were in safe keeping. In spite of

the serious calls on his time, in spite of his parliamentary duties, he has spared no personal exertions to keep in touch with every detail of the question, controlling and counselling the wisest course to pursue in the extremely complicated position arising out of the interlocking of international interests. He was a prominent figure in the International Conference at Paris last November, and it was on his initiative that there was brought into the resolutions adopted by that body the weighty rider that the delegates should interview their several Governments with a view to insisting on the essential element of European control over the reforms.

In the present position of international affairs, Gentlemen, it is not an easy task for any Committee to exercise powerful pressure on the Government. The interests of *Ententes* and Alliances have to be respected, and no single Power is at liberty to act on its own initiative without bringing about a general conflagration; nor, even in this twentieth century is it possible to send the fleet across the Taurus Mountains. We do not expect, either, that England should espouse by force of arms the cause of the oppressed in every corner of the world. Englishmen, however, have themselves regarded it as their mission to see that justice is rendered to the weak, and that the oppressor is not permitted to outrage the rights of humanity. It was through these time-honoured instincts of the people of this land that Napoleonic tyranny in Europe was crushed; that Greece was accorded her freedom and her independence; that Italian unity received its full moral support. A little nearer to our own time we find the voice of England—her public opinion—instrumental in no small measure in assigning to the Balkan States their autonomy, and thus severing for all time these minor Christian States from the incubus of Turkish rule. And it is this autonomy which enabled the Balkan States during the past thirty years to furbish up their war panoply, and to combine quite recently to free the less favoured Christians on the European side of the Black Sea from the Turkish yoke.

Armenia is unfortunate, Gentlemen, in her geographical position. Had she been on the European instead of the Asiatic side of the Black Sea, we should have had, not only so-called reforms, but autonomy itself long ago. But we will not quarrel with our historic position in being the possessors of the terrestrial Garden of Eden, and having in our midst Mt. Ararat and a beautiful country of lakes and plateaux, the second cradle of the human race. We are not only content, but we are proud of what nature has given us, and as in so many cases of abduction of Armenian women into the Turkish harems, where their beauty was their only crime, so with our country—had she been less favoured, she might have been spared by the marauding hordes that have overrun that beautiful land and passed into Europe through the centuries. It is this small country, this small nation, that has stood as a mighty bulwark against formidable onslaughts, and has even been the means of impeding the onrush of these hordes into Europe. Imagine how, amidst a sea of grinding tyranny and persecution, these

people have held tight to their traditions, how they, the first of nations to embrace Christianity, have not relaxed their hold of the Cross—but they have succumbed under an overpowering weight of numbers, and in doing so they have given their lives freely and valiantly, and made the history of our country one long martyrology.

It is these people, who are by instinct peace-loving and industrious, who have been driven to distraction by misrule, anarchy and massacre, that are asking the aid of England, the aid of the great civilised Powers of Europe, asking for a helping hand against an overwhelming tyranny. True, they can emigrate, and where they have so emigrated and have had the opportunity of self-help, they have risen to the highest rungs of the ladder, in Russia, in Egypt, in the United States, in other civilised countries, whether as soldiers, as diplomats, in the sciences and the arts, in commerce and finance. But why should they be forced to emigrate to give rein to their abilities? Why should not their own fatherland have the benefit of their talents? We have been fortunate in the past in having great men to help us—there is the outstanding figure of Gladstone, there is Viscount Bryce, our keen friend and supporter, and there have been a host of others. Their mantle has now fallen on our friend Mr. Aneurin Williams, and these champions are doing the work of humanity in trying to shape the opinion of this nation, so as to bring to bear on European diplomacy the necessity of seeing that the birthrights of mankind, liberty and security of life, are not withheld from our little nation.

Mr. Williams' work, to a certain stage, has been completed, and we have been promised reforms, without European control—half a loaf, so to speak, and it has been no fault of his. Our demands were extremely moderate, being comprised in the terms, equality, liberty, security. We wanted no autonomy, but we did want safeguards, that is, European control. We are, however, again compelled to trust to the promises of Turkey, with the blessings of the Powers. If the Turk has changed his character, all will be well—but, what if fanaticism rises rampant again, and the usual Turkish procrastination and lethargy leads, not to peace but the sword? A heavy burden of responsibility will, indeed, rest on the Powers. The atmosphere is just now charged with electricity—the Turks are restive, and are playing with boycott and inflammatory language for the moment; the Kurds are on the move and have already given us at Bitlis a foretaste of what they might do if they could but combine and bring together their forces. No, Gentlemen, Mr. Williams' work is not completed yet, it is only just beginning. The British Armenia Committee is, I am glad to hear, not to be dissolved with the granting of the reforms—I should say, the promise of reforms—but will continue to watch events, will keep an eye on the progress of the reforms. Mr. Williams will, I trust, live to see yet his labours fructify, and Armenia become the centre for the dissemination of the civilisation of the West amongst the backward nations of Kurdistan, Mesopotamia and Persia, a task for which she is eminently fitted. He is doing a great work for the cause of humanity,

and his efforts and his sympathies, whatever may be the outcome, will ever be cherished in the hearts of the grateful four millions of souls scattered throughout the world. Gentlemen, I propose the toast of Mr. Aneurin Williams, the Chairman of the British Armenia Committee, and ask you to join me in wishing him health and strength, and all wisdom in counsel, for prosecuting the labours he has so disinterestedly undertaken on behalf of Armenia and the Armenians.

Mr. ANEURIN WILLIAMS, M.P., after thanking the Armenian Committee for the kindly words that had been said of him, explained what the British Armenia Committee had been aiming at, and particularly that they had not aimed at the separation of Armenia from the Turkish Empire, or for the annexation of Armenia to any other country. There had not been any desire on the part of the Armenian leaders for either of these results; rather they felt that it was more easy for Armenians to retain their nationality and individuality as a recognised nation within the Turkish Empire.

He said that on paper the reform scheme that had been worked out was a disappointment to them, because it gave no real security of the good government for which they had been looking. He tried to estimate the good that might possibly come out of that reform scheme, and the possibility that it might be useless owing to the old obstructive ways of the Pashas. He expressed, however, a hope that even if the Turks had not learned anything in a moral and intellectual sense, they might at any rate be influenced by the wholesome fear that, in the absence of Armenian reforms, Russia would occupy Northern Armenia, and Germany, or possibly Austria, the part round Adana. He added that any such occupations would undoubtedly mean a general scramble among the Powers for different parts of Asiatic Turkey, and that Turkey itself would disappear. In fact, Armenian reforms meant the peace of Europe, and the defeat of those reforms meant great danger of European war.

He dwelt upon what the Balkan Committee, under the lead of Mr. Noel Buxton, had always tried to do, that is, the institution of reforms rather than disintegration in European Turkey; and he argued that if Turkey had been wise enough to accept such advice, she would have remained lord of a great European domain to the present day.

He hoped that the British Armenia Committee would go on working until they were certain that their great cause was soundly established upon a permanent basis of righteousness. What they had to do at present was to watch and to let Europe know what was happening in Armenia. In conclusion, he emphasised the obligation of Great Britain, arising out of the fact that it was she who prevented Russia from liberating Armenia in 1878; and it was incumbent on her to make amends for what she then did, presumably in her own interests, but to the detriment of the peace of Armenia.

Mr. M. BALIAN, in a brief speech, then proposed the toast of "The British Armenia Committee." This was responded to by Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR, M.P., who began by laying stress on the necessity of working up public opinion. He said that the cultivation of popular opinion in every country was one of the first necessities of the ultimate success of the Armenian nation. He advised Armenians to put more trust in this than in the good-will of Ministries. He then proceeded as follows:—

Your race has a title to the devoted love you give it; at once, as Colonel Gregory had said, the cradle and the outpost of Christianity, you have stood the shock of the hordes of heathenism and savagery for centuries. You have had your brilliant lights in literature; you have had your great warriors; you have had your noble martyrs; you have been faithful to your race and to your fatherland, even at the cost of an ocean of blood and tears; and you remain inflexibly true to these ideals. None of you, therefore, doubts any more than I do in the great future of your race, with the certainty of its finally winning its liberty.

I have often tried to find in nature some simile which would represent the indestructible quality of nationality, and this is how it appears to me: There is a great river which pursues its course from the mountain to the sea. Ten thousand summers have dried it up, but the river still goes on; ten thousand winters have locked it in the silence and seeming death of ice; but the river goes on. The river goes on until it ends sometimes in some great irresistible cataract like a Niagara. And so it is with a nation. Centuries appear to dry it up; centuries appear to congeal its spirit; but the nationality goes on, and the day comes when with liberty there is a Niagara of resurrection, new energies let loose, new spirit revealed; a future more powerful and more glorious than the best epochs of its power and its glory in the past.

Mr. NOEL BUXTON, M.P., then gave the toast of the "Cause of Armenia." He was happy in his allusions to several personal experiences of his recent travels in Armenia, and expressed astonishment at the remains he had seen of a past civilisation, which it would be well for the world to take thought of, as such knowledge would undoubtedly lead to a better understanding of Armenia's just cause in her present parlous condition. He drew an amusing comparison between Great Britain and Armenia, and asked, if their positions were reversed, some centuries hence, and the British, in their dire distress, were entertaining Armenians, as they were being entertained to-day, how would we expect Armenians to act towards us? An interesting speech, full of personal reminiscences of recent travel, was brought to a conclusion by his stating that he, too, felt with Mr. Aneurin Williams the moral responsibility resting upon the British nation since the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-8, and that this nation ought to do what-

ever lies in its power to fulfil the obligation arising therefrom. As the Psalmist sang of old :—

“If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.

If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to my mouth. . . .”

If we forget the “Cause of Armenia,” is it not then just that we should suffer the same penalties ?

Mr. K. FUNDUKLIAN, of Manchester, had the task of responding to this toast, which he did with much feeling and sympathetic references to the help extended to us by the British nation. As it was past eleven o'clock when he rose to respond, he had necessarily to restrict his remarks, and the audience lost what would have been a powerful and interesting case for the Cause of Armenia from such a speaker.

An interesting and instructive evening's proceedings were brought to a termination by Mr. Aneurin Williams proposing the toast of the Chairman Archbishop, to which His Grace briefly responded.

cracian The Saving of Adana.

Adana, the most important town on the Cilician plain, and the capital of one of the richest provinces of the Ottoman Empire, will ever be associated with the massacres of Armenians which took place there five years ago. The productive district, in which the town is situated, draws people from every part of Asia Minor to earn their living, and the city is thus full of thousands of young men who are without home or family. In the absence of a proper organisation for meeting their social wants, harpies have sprung up in shoals, and with the help of cafés, casinos, drinking and gambling hells, and other evil resorts, they are doing their worst to undermine the moral and physical condition of the young population, a very large percentage of whom are Armenians.

Protestant missionaries have done and are doing a great deal to combat the terrible state of affairs, and foremost among them is the Rev. W. N. Chambers, of Adana, who did yeoman service in protecting to the best of his power, the lives of Armenians during the massacres. He is now the moving spirit for the establishment, under the auspices of The Young Men's Christian Association, of a building which will provide healthy and innocent counter-attractions to the vicious amusements which, unfortunately, are the only ones at present to be had at Adana. We have no hesitation in bringing these praiseworthy efforts to the notice of our readers, knowing as we do from personal knowledge

of the excellent results of similar institutions in India and other parts of the East ; and more especially for the reason that it will open its doors to members of all denominations and races, and that the Association is careful to avoid any attempt at proselytising.

We have been privileged to peruse the letters of support which have been written by prominent residents of Adana, among whom are consular officials, lawyers, physicians, leaders of commerce, and also ladies—British, German and Armenian—who are not restricted to one Christian denomination, but include Gregorian Armenians and Protestants, all eagerly longing for the proposed establishment in the interests of the young generation.

Mr. A. Monck-Mason, the British Vice-Consul, writes thus :—

“The moral problem of Adana differs materially from that of Constantinople in as much as, with all its prosperity, there exists in the former town practically not one single resort of innocent amusement for the thousands of young men engaged in business there. Excellent wages are earned, but the enormous increase within the last three years of native and imported low-class theatrical companies, dancing and musical troupes, houses of ill-fame, and drinking saloons testify how a large part of them are spent.

“The proposed Y.M.C.A. building will meet a great need, and there can be no doubt that it will be to the full as successful as has been the Y.M.C.A. organisation in Constantinople. The aims will be entirely non-political ; its avowed scope being simply to offer to men (and especially young men) of all denominations and races healthy and innocent counter-attractions to the vicious amusements which, unfortunately, are the only ones to be had in Adana.”

In this connection we have been favoured with an interview with Mr. H. Charles Woods, the well-known war correspondent, and author of “The Danger Zone of Europe” and other works on the Near East, who is personally acquainted with Adana. On enquiring as to the necessity and utility of the proposed scheme, he at once gave us his reasons, which we will place before our readers in a succinct form :—

“(1) The Armenian peasants, like the young men of all the other Christian races of the Ottoman Empire, are willing to accept the assistance of any society which provides them with a means of improving their education. As a result of this, men would be willing and would desire to attend any kind of social club—I hope you will understand the spirit in which I use these words—for the material benefits with which they would be provided there.

“(2) The position at Adana has been and is a very special one. To begin with, Adana is not only the most important town on the Cilician Plain, but it is also the capital of one of the richest provinces in the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, the greater part of the district subjected to the awful outbreak and massacres of the year 1909 was hardly touched during the massacres of the

years 1895 and 1896. Consequently during all the years which intervened between 1896 and 1909 the Christians, who inhabited the very fertile Plain of Cilicia, increased both in numbers and in wealth.

"(3) Adana and the surrounding plain has always been a centre to which the people come for work or amusement. Indeed the massacre of the year 1909 was much more terrible than would otherwise have been the case owing to the fact that large numbers of Armenian men, unaccompanied by their families, had already arrived from the hills in order to obtain their work, as is their custom, in the coming harvest.

"(4) The coming of the Baghdad railway has not only greatly increased the prosperity of the city but it has drawn towards it the people of the whole surrounding country. The arrival of countless Europeans has, too, of course, introduced what may be called a sort of Western civilisation. In other words, means of amusement are now provided for the people of all classes which in the past would have been quite unknown to them. At the present time, with the exception of the work of the American missionaries, which is excellent in every way, there is nothing to counteract the evil influences of the cafés, saloons, and other places of evil resort, which are wide open and largely attended by men, many of whom come to Adana without their families. Here indeed a branch of the Y.M.C.A., a society which does not work to proselytise, might be a 'powerful agency for the development of the religious, social, and physical well-being' of the Armenian youth.

"(5) As a result of the relief distributed at the time of the massacres of 1909, the excellent work of Mr. Manoogian, with whom I am personally acquainted, is already known. I saw his energetic work shortly after the massacres, and I can only say that I think his reputation must have been already established in the work of the Y.M.C.A. on a basis which must leave a favourable opening for the enlargement of this work.

"(6) The fact that the Baghdad railway is now open as far as a point situated considerably to the East of Adana, and that it is already possible to travel as far as Alexandretta by train, makes Adana an extremely favourable centre for any work. Indeed, when the Taurus section of the railway is complete, which should be the case ere long, Adana will probably become one of the most important towns in Asia Minor."

We may mention, in conclusion, that an English gentleman, who wishes to remain anonymous, has offered £1,000 towards the scheme, on condition that twice that sum is raised during the year 1914 in Europe and America, and £200 in Adana itself. With regard to the latter sum, two-thirds of the amount has already been promised. The Hon. Secretary of the Foreign Department of The Young Men's Christian Association, 13, Russell Square, W.C., will be only too willing to receive contributions for the major portion of the fund assigned to Europe and America.

"Nasreddin Hodja."

THE EFFECT OF "TURKISH DELIGHT" ON A REPORTER.

Dramatic art, as it is known in Europe, was introduced into Turkey by Armenians; but the plays there are almost entirely in the Turkish language, which is universally known by Turks and Armenians. A company of Armenian actors gave at the Small Queen's Hall, on the evening of May 2nd, a performance of "Nasreddin Hodja," round whom hangs many a fantastic tale in Turkish romance. The performance, in its Oriental setting and flavour, vied, in no small measure, with the more pretentious renderings on the London stage of Oscar Asche in "Kismet."

We have been furnished with an account of the play by a correspondent, and as we were ourselves present in the Hall, and can vouch for its correctness of detail and justness of criticism, we give it first place below. The second account which we give, with its original heading, is taken from the pages of the *Daily Express* of May 4th. When we read this, we rubbed our eyes and wondered whether we had actually witnessed the play, or whether we had been in dreamland. There are still people in this world who believe everything that is put in print, and as newspapers must have "copy," it is perhaps immaterial for the bulk of mankind whether the account of such an occurrence is prepared in Queen's Hall or in St. Bride Street. The Reporter in question must have hurried through his dinner, and looked forward to his dessert of "Turkish Delight" in an atmosphere of Oriental mysticism. The prismatic rays of his spectacles produced red fezes on the bare heads of men in the audience who were none other than Englishmen and Armenians. "Turkish Delight" acted on his jaded brain as *hashish*, until the fair features of the ladies in the Hall (again English and Armenian) elongated into weird *yashmaks*, revealing "two sparkling dark eyes." Taking the *Daily Express* account of the play as a comic interlude for our readers—for neither a red fez nor a *yashmak* was visible in the Hall, and we noticed but one Turkish or Kurdish gentleman there, and he was in European evening dress—we readily reproduce it in its original form.

I.

Nasreddin Hodja, who is ignorant of letters, has secured the post of tutor in the household of Hussein Beg, a wealthy Kurd, to whom it suddenly occurs that his two sons, aged 18 and 22, should have some intellectual and moral training. The Hodja manages to scrape along for a few days by questioning his wards as to what they already know of the alphabet, and expresses his satisfaction as to their progress. The further injunctions of the Beg, to keep a close watch over the two

young men and to superintend their conduct, are not so easy to carry out, for, alas! they come too late. Ahmed, the elder of the two, confesses to his tutor not only that he has been out without permission, but that he has been enamoured of a girl in a neighbouring farm; and he introduces into the house the girl and the offspring of their love. As Hussein Beg is shortly expected on the scene, the mother and child are spirited away into the Hodja's room. Here they are detected first by Nouri, the half-witted younger son, who goes through a process of eavesdropping and reports his conclusions to his father. The latter's fury knows no bounds, but the dramatic power of the Hodja, in an access of wounded dignity and pride, wards off the Beg's suspicions, as the latter refuses the key of the room proffered by the Hodja, whom he feels he has unconsciously wronged. The tension is now broken by the sudden squeals of the child from the Hodja's room. A violent scene ends in the Hodja impressing on the Beg that after all it is his own grandson; and as this domineering individual cannot resist the charms of the baby, the young couple are happily united with his blessing. The Hodja remains on the farm to do odd jobs.

The acting was extremely well done, Mr. Smpad Kessedjian displaying a sense of humour which did not pass the boundary line between comedy and farce. His every look, his every gesture—whether he raised his shoulders or eyebrows and glared round for fear of detection, whether he climbed cat-like on to a chair and sat with legs bent under him—was expressive, and portrayed to perfection a particular, and not uncommon type of Turk.

Mr. Tanig Petimian looked every inch as the despotic and irascible Kurdish Beg; and his colossal stature and picturesque costume, stuck round with murderous weapons, added to the realistic nature of his part. The parts of the two sons were well played by Mr. A. Solakian and Mr. S. Berhoudar—the latter, perhaps, somewhat exaggerated the rôle of the irresponsible son, which was a pity, for his rendering of comical Oriental characters is excellent when restricted to a happy mean. The parts allotted to the ladies were small, as they must needs be in Mohammedan life, but they were well rendered by Mrs. Kessedjian as the servant, and Miss A. Arabelian as Sabriyé, the young girl.

That the acting was really of a high order can well be imagined from the reception given to the play; for even that part of the audience which did not understand the Turkish language was kept in fits of laughter throughout the evening, the rendering of the parts being so obviously natural. We hope to see further such efforts of dramatic talent in depicting Oriental life.

VARTENIE.

II. TURKISH DELIGHT.

OTTOMAN AUDIENCE AMUSED BY A NATIVE PLAY.

Turkish theatrical talent was revealed for the first time in London on Saturday night at the Small Queen's Hall, when a Turkish company produced a Turkish play in the Turkish language before an audience almost entirely composed of Turks.

Oriental ideas of humour vary considerably from our own, and many of the trite remarks by the famous Nassredin Hodja, from which the play takes its name, would leave a Western European public utterly unmoved, but the Turks who were present on Saturday enjoyed themselves down to the ground.

Men wearing the fez and ladies with the yashmak, which concealed their countenance and only revealed two sparkling dark eyes, were seized with fits of uncontrollable laughter at the very sight of the popular Nassredin, whose profound remarks have become legendary in Turkish national history, and their hilarity continued to the finish of the performance.

The story of the play is simple enough, and centres round the efforts of the Hodja to conceal his blank ignorance from the father who has engaged him to teach his sons to read.

The producer and chief actor was M. Smpad Kessedjian, from the Imperial Ottoman Theatre at Constantinople, and he proposes to give a similar performance for the benefit of his countrymen at Manchester.

"Daily Express," May 4th, 1914.

Announcements.

THE ARMENIAN UNITED ASSOCIATION OF LONDON.

A Conversazione will be held at the Elysée Hall, Queen's Road, Bayswater, W., on Sunday, July 12th next.

During August and September there will be no Social gatherings.

MARRIAGE OF MR. NOEL BUXTON, M.P.

The name of Buxton has been so intimately associated of late with Armenia that we have pleasure in recording in these pages the marriage of Mr. Noel Buxton, M.P., who, in company with his brother, the Rev. Harold Buxton, recently undertook a journey of personal enquiry into the regions, Russian, Persian and Turkish, inhabited by Armenians.

The following account of the marriage is taken from *The Times* of May 1st, 1914 :—

MR. NOEL BUXTON AND MISS PELHAM BURN.

"The marriage of Mr. Noel Buxton, M.P., second son of Sir Fowell and Lady Victoria Buxton, to Lucy Edith, eldest daughter of Major and Mrs. Pelham Burn, of Cliff House, Cromer, took place yesterday at St. James's, Piccadilly.

"Major Pelham Burn gave away his daughter, who wore a gown of white charmeuse draped with old lace, Viscount Moore and Master Ronald de Bunsen acting as trainbearers. The bridesmaids were the Misses Elisabeth, Kathleen, and Ruth Pelham Burn (the bride's sisters), and Miss Lucy Buxton and Miss Hepburn Scott (nieces of the bridegroom). The Rev. Harold Buxton was best man to his brother. Sir Archibald and the Hon. Lady Orr-Ewing lent 7, Hereford Gardens, for the reception. The honeymoon will be spent in Italy."

Literary Section.

Reviews and Notices.

I.

(Specially Contributed.)

"THE PEOPLE OF ARMENIA." By Archag Tchobanian, translated by G. Marcar Gregory (*J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd.*). Price 1s. 6d. net.

At the present moment, when the Near Eastern Question is possessed of a greater importance to Europe as a whole than has been the case for many a year, and when the future of Turkish Power in Asia Minor largely depends upon the attitude of the Ottoman Government towards the Christian inhabitants of that district, any book which explains the history, customs and daily lives of the Armenian people, must be possessed of the greatest value to the British reader. Such a book is the one at present under review. Indeed, as Lord Bryce correctly says in his Introduction, "Europe ought to know more than she has hitherto known of the achievements of the Armenian race No nation has a longer record of valour and patriotism, hardly any nation a record of such sufferings and of such loyalty to the Christian faith."

"*The People of Armenia*," which has been well and ably translated into English by Colonel Gregory, is published in its original form, that is, as a lecture which was originally delivered before a Parisian audience. The work is divided into four principal sections. After briefly reminding his readers of the early and remarkable history of the Armenian people, the author goes on to describe the characteristics, and the poetical, literary and artistic achievements of his fellow countrymen.

Obviously himself a pro-Russian, M. Tchobanian compares the position of the Armenians in that country, in Persia and in Turkey, and states that in the part of Armenia now ruled by the Tsar, "the Armenian element has found security and equality before the law, a circumstance which was altogether unknown under Mohammedan rule." Again, the author strikes at the very root of the cause of the well-known business success of his people when he says, "Armenians are almost entirely unfettered by the doctrine of fatalism. . . . They have an instinctive faith in the individual power of man. . . . Although they have been often and severely hit by misfortune, they have always held on to hope, which is the essence of life—hope in a better future, in justice that is close at hand."

The parts of the book devoted to Armenian poetry, literature and art must be extremely interesting to all those who study such subjects. Indeed, many travellers who have visited Constantinople, and who have been privileged to pass between the magnificent shores of the Bosphorus, may learn with surprise that the Palaces of Tcheragan and of Dolmabahatché were actually built by Armenian architects.

But from a political point of view the last section is by far the most interesting in the book. Here the author not only shows the manner in which the Armenians have been deceived as to the real meaning of the Turkish Constitution, but he also demonstrates his moderation and his large-mindedness by the numerous remarks which he makes upon the Armenian programme. "The Armenians do not ask for the restoration of their ancient kingdom. . . . They do not ask for so much as a new crusade. . . . They ask for an administrative autonomy, for a rule of order and of law. . . . They desire to be allowed to live and to grow under normal conditions, under conditions that will permit them to play, unfettered and for the good of all, their rôle of workers in the cause of civilisation."

In the short space available for this review it is not possible to enter into all the features of this valuable little book. Sufficient is it therefore to say that those who know nothing of the Armenians, their customs and their history, as well as those who are already well versed in those subjects, will find a careful perusal of its pages well worth any time which they may be able to devote to the undertaking.

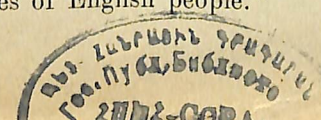
H. C. W.

II.

The following notice of the same work is taken from the pages of *The Asiatic Review* for May, 1914 :—

"We welcome the appearance of a translation by Mr. G. Marcar Gregory of Archag Tchobanian's book on Armenia. The subject of Armenia is familiar to Englishmen owing to its association with the name of Mr. Gladstone; but it must be confessed that most of our fellow-countrymen are profoundly ignorant of the country and its inhabitants. The book contains a short history of the Armenian people, an account of its poetry and art, and the philosophic conceptions which underlie them, and the personalities which created them; and concludes with an eloquent appeal to the sympathies of English people."

P. S. C.



The Armenian United Association of London.

FOUNDED 1898. RECONSTRUCTED 1913.

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This Association has been founded with the double object of (1) drawing together all Armenians in the British capital, bringing them into touch with the British public, and thus establishing a closer sympathy between the two nations; and (2) focussing in the centre of the civilised world the many questions, both social and national, which affect Armenia and the Armenians.

With the above objects in view, the Association is directing its energies to—

- (1) The establishment of a permanent habitation in London, which will embrace a hall for meetings, a reading-room and a library.
- (2) The organisation of social and literary gatherings.
- (3) The relief and education of Armenian orphans rendered destitute through chronic misrule in Armenia.
- (4) Watching the trend of political affairs affecting Armenia, and doing the utmost by pacific means towards the amelioration of the country and the people through (a) a Standing Committee, and by (b) the publication of literature.
- (5) The gradual raising of a fund for the establishment of an Armenian Church in London.

Membership is open to Armenians of both sexes.

Subscription:—Annual, 10/-; entrance fee, 5/-. Life Members, 5 guineas.

Sympathisers and friends of other nationalities are eligible for election as Hon. Members, but they have no voice in the management, and pay no subscriptions.

It will be evident that the above nominal subscription is just sufficient for the bare social functions of the Association. The more important functions are dependent for their success on the liberality of sympathisers, and donations are earnestly requested for the above national objects from those who are in a position to contribute. The response since the reorganisation of the Association has been very encouraging, but much more is needed to place the Association on a secure basis for prosecuting the work outlined above.

Communications affecting Membership, or any of the objects of the Association, should be addressed to

THE HON. SECRETARY,

44, Queen's Road,

Bayswater, London, W.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

PERIODICALS CONNECTED WITH ARMENIA.

The Oriental World (formerly **Armenia**).—A monthly Literary and Political Magazine devoted to the literature and politics of the Near Eastern Countries. Edited and published by Arshag D. Mahdesian, 175, Fifth Avenue, New York, U.S.A. Foreign subscription \$2.00.

Pro Armenia.—An organ in support of reforms in Armenia and in Turkey. Annual subscription, 10 francs. 31, Villa d'Alesia, Paris XIV^e.

The Asiatic Review.—Noted for its articles on Eastern Politics, Finance, Literature and Art. Every six weeks, 2s. 6d. net. Annual subscription, £1 post free. Editorial Offices, Westminster Chambers, 3, Victoria Street, S.W.

The Friend of Armenia.—Published quarterly. Annual subscription, 1s. 47, Victoria Street, London, S.W.

BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, MAPS, &c.

Armenia.—Its People, Sufferings and Demands. The British Armenia Committee, Queen Anne's Chambers, Westminster, London. 1d.

The Truth about Armenia, by EMILY J. ROBINSON. 1d., by post 1½d. One doz. copies, 1s., or 7/6 for 100 copies, post free. Apply to Miss Robinson, 35a, Elsham Road, Kensington, London, W.

Map of Turkish Armenia.—Enlarged edition of the Map appearing in this periodical, on cloth to fold, in cover, 1s. per copy. Apply to Assistant Secretary, The Armenian United Association, 44, Queen's Road, Bayswater, London, W.

The Church of Armenia—Her History, Doctrine, Rule, Discipline, Liturgy, Literature, and Existing Condition, by Mgr. Malachia Ormanian, translated by G. Marcar Gregory. V.D., 5s. net (postage 4d.). Apply to the translator, 36, Gunterstone Road, West Kensington, London, W.

Raffi's Works—Samuel, 8s.; Davit Beg, 8s.; Kaitzer I and II, 12s.; Khent, Djalaleddin, 5s.; Khamsai Meliks, 5s.; Persia, 5s.; Khachakogh, 5s.; Salbi, 8s.; Tachkahajk, 3s.; Zahrumar, 5s. Apply Mrs. Raffi, 32, Richmond Gardens, Shepherd's Bush, London, W.

The People of Armenia.—A lecture delivered in Paris by Archag Tchobanian, translated into English by G. Marcar Gregory. Published by J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., London, 1s. 6d. net. Now ready. Copies in any number can also be had through the Assistant Secretary, Armenian United Association, 44, Queen's Road, Bayswater, London, W.